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# Behind the Scenes of a Research Development Day

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**Michigan  
Technological**  
University

# Initiation of a Day-long RD Event 2009

Initially a program focused on NSF CAREER. **Why?**

- Faculty demographic shift & University Strategic Faculty Hiring Initiatives
- First event: 42 Assistant Professors attended out of 92 total Assistant Professors university-wide (46%)
- Continued this early-career focus as 35 new Assistant Professors were added in the next 2 years

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# Gaining Traction for the New Event

- Provost, Deans, & VPR involved to gain support; President also supportive. Invites/encouragement from chairs.
- Steering committee: RD team, associate deans for research, two prior CAREER awardees
- Two former rotating NSF program directors (back on campus) involved in the day's events

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# Logistics of the first event

- Agenda planned by steering committee
- Held on a Saturday in February to avoid class conflicts
- Follow-up sessions throughout spring (e.g., CAREER budgeting, education/outreach, peer review/feedback)
- Encouraged individual visits to NSF for Program Director meetings as follow-up

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# First RD Day (CAREER-focused) Agenda Items

- Advice from prior awardees
- Advice from former NSF program directors
- Planning for submission; discussion of campus resources
- Mock review panel experience
- Internal/administrative process for submission
- Social with chairs, deans, VPR, president

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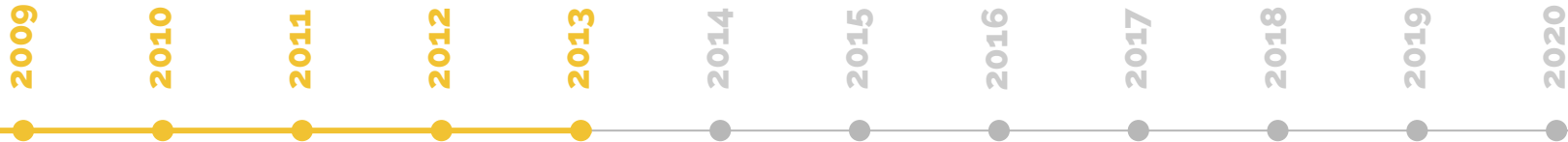
## Subsequent CAREER RD Days 2010-2013

**2010-2011:** Again held on a Saturday; Similar agenda; Added two tracks (returning and new participants). Returning participants focused on understanding reviews and resubmission

**2011:** Added centrally organized DC visit for program director meetings

**2012:** NSF CAREER focus but over a series of shorter workshops

**2013:** Continued with a series of events, broadened to early career programs at other agencies



# Discussion

What does your RD office do to support early-career faculty programs?

Does your RD office sponsor university-wide RD events?

- How often?
- What is the focus?
- Who organizes/supports the events?

Do you have any questions about our initial RD Day items?



*Photo by [Headway](#) on [Unsplash](#)*

## RD Day: Second Generation 2014 - present

- Event rebranded as “Research Development Day” and moved back to a full-day event; Thursday before Spring semester
- Broadened from early-career focus to all career stages
- Sessions on multiple agencies
- Follow-up sessions offer more depth
- Faculty DC trip moved to May (no longer focused on summer CAREER submissions)

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# Regular Features & Themes

## REGULAR FEATURES

Research recognitions

Keynote speaker

Networking social / Attendee roster

Preparing for DC Trip

## THEMES

Research Strategy

Team Science

Creating Impact

# External speakers

Video calls with program officers

## LESSONS LEARNED:

- Insist on practicing the setup on both ends
- Have someone ready to troubleshoot if connection doesn't perform or fails
- Avoid government shutdowns



*Photo by [Andy Feliciotti](#) on [Unsplash](#)*

# Keynote speaker

We've had two keynote speakers:

Both times, we included conversations, strategy, and deep dives into our RD unit and with our VPR.



Alicia Knoedler

2018



Holly Falk-Krzesinski

2019

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2017

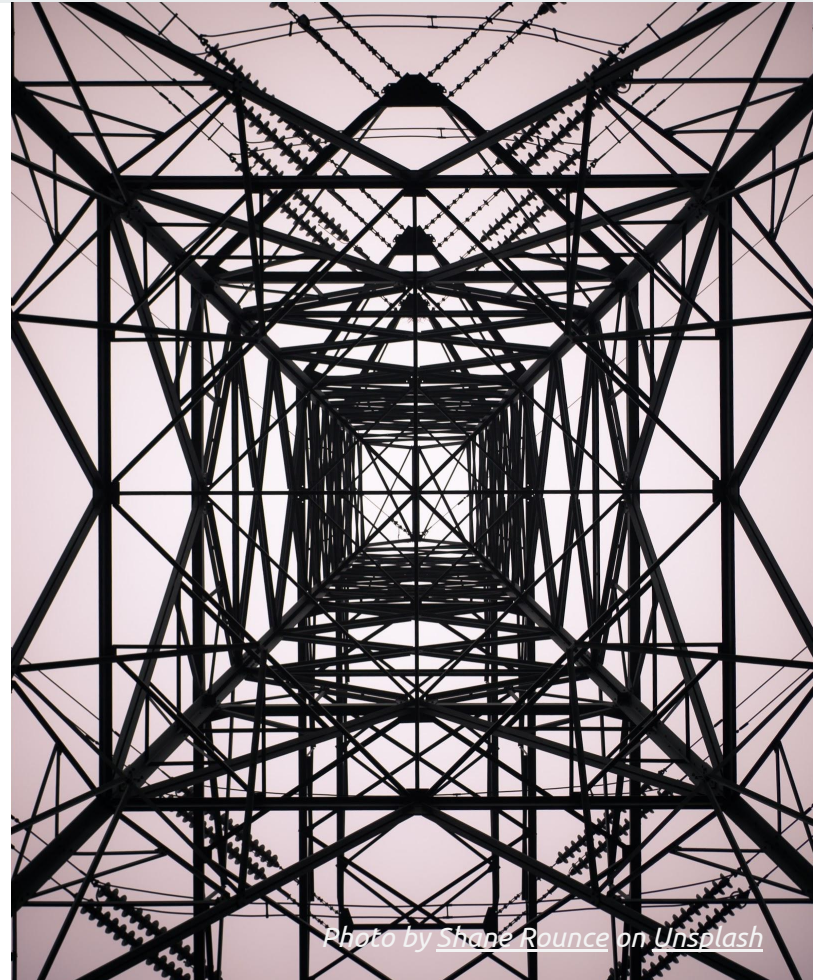
2018

2019

2020

# RD goals for the event

- Engage faculty in thinking outside their office walls.
- Meet potential collaborators from across campus
- Learn and share knowledge/experiences about various agencies
- Promote research and celebrate successes



*Photo by [Shane Rounce](#) on Unsplash*

# Evaluation

[illegible]

# Challenges

Technology issues (always)

Space issues (too many people); unknown choice of breakout sessions

Difficulty in getting full-day commitments (unknown session attendance)

Relevant content for a variety of research and agency interests, different career stages

Travel issues for guest speakers

# Planning strategies

Engage key stakeholders to encourage attendance (deans, chairs, center/institute directors)

Engage intended audience in the planning stage

Feedback from attendees gives great ideas for future years

Engage speakers/session leaders from across campus



Photo by [Marten Bjork](#) on [Unsplash](#)

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# Draft Agenda



<b>45 min.</b>	Breakfast with Deans
<b>15 min.</b>	Registration & muffins
<b>15 min.</b>	Welcome: set context with a theme
<b>45 min.</b>	Breakout 1: Agencies (4 sessions)
<b>15 min.</b>	Break
<b>30 min.</b>	Breakout 2 (3 topics)
<b>30 min.</b>	Breakout 3 (same 3 topics as Breakout 2)
<b>30 min.</b>	Internal Support

<b>50 min.</b>	Lunch
<b>60 min.</b>	Keynote
<b>30 min.</b>	Breakout 4 (3 topics)
<b>30 min.</b>	Breakout 5 (same 3 topics as Breakout 4)
<b>10 min.</b>	Break
<b>45 min.</b>	Fireside Chat (Panel of 4 highly successful faculty in context of the theme)
<b>75 min.</b>	Research Recognitions
<b>75 min.</b>	Wine & Cheese Reception

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Email us for a draft agenda

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# Our Future

Increased external engagement (e.g., Zoom sessions with agency representatives)

Networking / PD for distributed research development staff

Sessions for non-faculty researchers

2014

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*Photo by Alex wong on Unsplash*

end.

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